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Highlights

• ENJOY YOUR SPIRITUAL LIFE

His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada

• DIFFERENT LEVELS OF VAISHNAVAS

Srila Bhaktivinode Thakur

• THE FIRST ATTRACTION — PART 2

From Srila Jiva Goswami's **Gopāla-pūrva-campūḥ**, 15th pūraṇa.



ENJOY YOUR SPIRITUAL LIFE

**His Divine Grace A. C.
Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada**

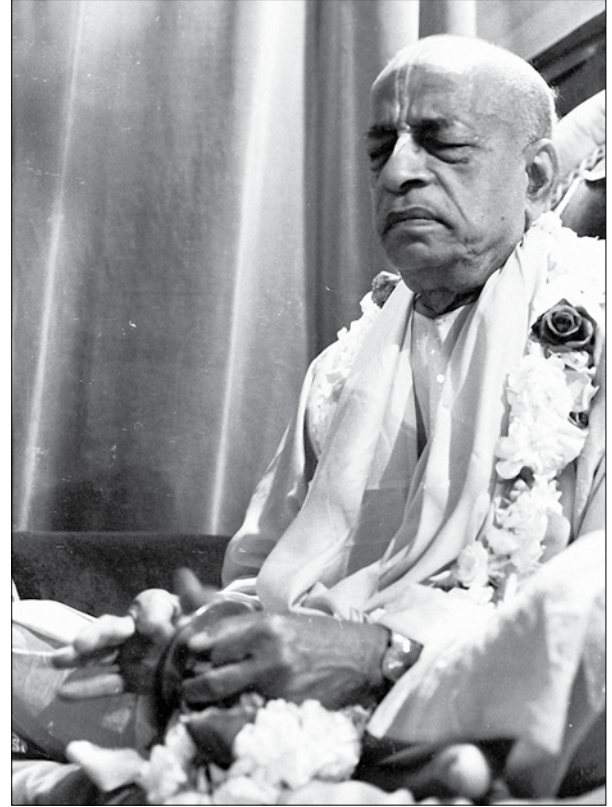
Please accept my greetings. I am in due receipt of your letter and have noted the contents carefully. As promised by me previously, I am sending herewith the gramophone record of my *kīrtana* and short speech thereof. I hope you will enjoy it. (Letter to Krishna Panditji. 15 April 1967.)

When I am there I shall see if your presence is actually required there. In the meantime you can continue with your painting as usual and enjoy spiritual life. (Letter to Jadurani. 26 October 1967.)

I think there is not any good English version of *Mahābhārata*, but very soon we shall have the *Bhagavad-gītā* and the *Teachings of Lord Chaitanya*, and you can enjoy reading them. (Letter to Nandarani and Dayananda. 29 April 1968.)

Please always talk about Krishna amongst you two sisters, and enjoy life. This is very good opportunity that you are talking and painting about Krishna, so that your mind, hands, and attention are all absorbed in Krishna *samādhi*, and the tongue in chanting Hare Krishna. This is first class *samādhi*, and the highest position of the greatest *yogī*. Try to continue this atmosphere happily. (Letter to Madhavi Lata. 20 June 1968.)

Krishna is so kind that he has saved both of you. Now, feeling this obligation to Krishna, you should



His Divine Grace

A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada

be more enthusiastic to serve Krishna, and I am very pleased to learn that you have got a nice beautiful Krishna-conscious child. So raise her to full Krishna Consciousness, and engage yourself and your husband, and then the family will be a very beautiful, happy family. You will enjoy in this world and in the next world. (Letter to Krishna Devi. 18 October 1968.)

DIFFERENT LEVELS OF VAISHNAVAS

Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakur

The renunciate *vaiṣṇavas* should not think that they are more respectable than the *gṛhastha-vaiṣṇavas*. One should know that the difference in respect among the *vaiṣṇavas* lies only between *uttama-adhikārī* and *madhyama-adhikārī*. Both *uttama-adhikārīs* and *madhyama-adhikārīs* are found among the *gṛhasthas*. This rule also applies to the renunciate *vaiṣṇavas*. The glories of the renunciate *vaiṣṇavas* are that they have given up the association of women, greed for money, and bodily pleasure. The *gṛhastha-vaiṣṇavas* have special glories. Many of them work hard to earn money, and after serving Krishna they serve *gṛhastha* and *sannyāsī-vaiṣṇavas*. Whether one is a *gṛhastha* or a *sannyāsī*, the principal cause for respect is the attainment of devotional service. One should be respected as a *vaiṣṇava* according to one's advancement in devotional service. There is no other cause to distinguish the level of a *vaiṣṇava*. ❧

— Bhaktivinoda Vani Vaibhava. Translated by Bhumipati Das. Published by Iswara Das and Touchstone Media. Vrindavan. 2003.

THE FIRST ATTRACTION – PART 2

**From Srila Jīva Goswami's
Gopāla-pūrva-campu, 15th pūraṇa**

In the previous part, Srila Jīva Goswami described the evening assembly consisting of Radha and her sakhīs, Krishna and his friends, and the two singers Madhukantha and Snigdhanakantha. The two singers started to sing the nāndī (introduction verses) for the evening. The first invocation verse introduces the subject matter.

*imau gauri-śyāmau manasi viparītau bahir api
sphurat tadvad vastrāv iti budha-janair niścitam idam
sa ko 'pyaccha-premā vilasad ubhaya-sphūrtikatayā
dadhan mūrti-bhāvaṁ pṛthag-apṛthagapy āvirud abhūt*

Although these two are Gauri (golden-hued) and Shyam (dark-hued), within their minds is the exact opposite [i.e. Gauri is dark-hued in her mind due to Shyam and Shyam is golden-hued in his mind due to Gauri]. Indeed, the wise have concluded that this opposite condition of their minds is reflected in the color of their cloth [i.e. Shyam's golden mind is reflected in his *pītāmbara* cloth and her dark-hued mind is reflected in the shade of her cloth]. In this way, it seems to be the same indescribable love which has exhibited itself in two different bodies of two different shades, although it is actually one substance.

[**Translator's Note:** This is the first verse of a *maṅgalācaraṇa*, auspicious invocation at the beginning of any performance. As stated in the *Caitanya-caritāmṛta ādi* 1.22, the *maṅgalācaraṇa* verses involve three processes, *vastu-nirdeśātmaka* (defining the objective), *namas-kriyātmaka* (offering obeisances) and *āśir-vādātmaka* (offering benedictions). This particular verse is a *vastu-nirdeśātmaka* invocation in the meter known as *śikharinī*, the same meter used in *Jagannāthāṣṭakam*.]

*śrīr āsām na tulāṁ bibharti nitarām ity uddavaḥ kīrtayan
yāsām aṅghri-rajo nanāma hariṇā yaḥ svena tulyo mataḥ
tāsām tat-priyatā-sudhākara-tanuṁ viṣvak cakorāyite
nānenānugatām samasta-mahitām vandāmahe rādhikām*

Even Uddhava, the devotee considered by Lord Hari to be as dear as his own self, said that Sri, Lakṣmi Devī, can absolutely never match the *gopīs*. That same Uddhava also repeatedly paid obeisances to the dust of the feet of these *gopīs*. Among all those *gopīs*, however, is one who has a body composed entirely of the nectar of love of Lord Hari. In her presence, Krishna sways to and fro like a *cakora* bird and always follows in her footsteps. We offer our obeisances to that all-worshipable Sri Radhika.

[**Translator's Note:** This is a *namas-kriyātmaka* invocation in the meter known as *vikṛīḍita-śārdūla* — the same one used in *Ṣaḍ-gosvāmy-aṣṭakam*.]

*premā yo 'sau rādhikā-kṛṣṇa-yugmaṁ
svānandena plāvayitvā sakhīś ca
śaśvad viśvaṁ plāvayan suprasiddhaḥ
so 'yaṁ buddhiḥ naḥ samiddhām karotu*

Premā, divine love, through its own joy has inundated Sri Radhika-Krishna as well as the *sakhīs* and is constantly inundating all the worlds. May this love illuminate and enlighten us!

[**Translator's Note:** This is an *āśir-vādātmaka* invocation in the meter known as *śālīnī* — used often in *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam*, e.g. 10.3.24]

The brothers were watching the shy smiles of the couple. Then Snigdhanakantha eagerly began the narration:

“Just like we described the sweetness of Krishna's birth in a previous chapter, the sweetness of Sri Radhika's birth also needs to be described. However, in doing so we will indicate only a few things, for we are shy of describing too much.

“This has been brought out in the *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* (10.5.18):

*tata ārabhya nandasya vrajaḥ sarva-saṁṛddhimān
harer nivāsātma-guṇai ramākṛīḍam abhūn nṛpa*



Painting by D. Banerji, Kolkata. Circa 1950s

Mohāna Mādhurī — Enchanting Beauty

“Beginning from the day of Krishna’s appearance, Nanda’s Vraja had become like an all-prosperous playground for Rama Devi (Lakshmi) due to the Lord personally residing here and exhibiting his qualities.”

[**Translator’s Note:** Someone may ask how this verse indicates Sri Radhika’s appearance since it speaks only of the appearance of Rama Devi (Lakshmi) upon the appearance of Lord Hari in Vraja. Snigdhanakanta replies to this.]

“This verse is explained as follows:

*janmārabhya harer vraja-sthalaṁ abhūd viśvardhi yuktam punar
lakṣmīnām ramaṇāspadañca tad adhiṣṭhānād viśiṣyājani
rādhā yāsu lālāsa pūrṇa-śaśa-bhṛn-mūrtiṇa tārāsu sā
kāntiḥ kintv iha citra-bhāva-valitā yā kṛṣṇa-pakṣādhikā*

“From the very birth of Lord Hari, this place of Vraja had again become complete with all worldly opulences; and since Vraja was the place of residence of Sri Hari, it had especially become the playground of all Lakshmis (*gopīs*). Moreover, just like the beautiful rabbit-marked moon beautifully stands out among the various stars, the form of Sri Radha was especially magnificent among them all. Moreover, the moon in its waxing phase (*kṛṣṇa-pakṣa*) only exhibits its ordinary brightness,

but Sri Radha exhibited a beautiful brightness filled with amazing qualities (*citra-bhāva-valitā*).”

[**Translator’s Note:** The meter is *vikrīḍita-śārdūla*. The last line of this verse is a play on words and can also be translated as follows, “However, the beautiful brightness of Sri Radha was such that it completely conquered the mood of Chitravali (*citra-bhāva-valitā*) for she was always better in receiving favor from Krishna (*kṛṣṇa-pakṣādhikā*)”].

“In the *Bṛhad-gautamīya-tantra* the status of Sri Radhika as being specially situated over everyone is described as follows:

*devī kṛṣṇamayī proktā rādhikā para-devatā
sarva-lakṣmī-mayī sarva-kāntiḥ sammohinī parā*

“That goddess known as Radhika is *kṛṣṇa-mayī* (full of Krishna consciousness) and is the topmost deity. She is the summum bonum of all Lakshmis, she possesses all their effulgence, and she is the original internal potency attracting the Lord in all ways.”

[**Translator’s Note:** Now a question may arise as to what is the lineage of Sri Radhika and the other *gopīs*. In reply to this, Snigdhanakanta says:]

Unknown artist



“The *māgadhas* (singers who know about the lineage of famous personalities) have said that all these *gopīs*, who were greater even than Lakshmi Devi, appeared in the lineage of Srīman Parjanya Maharaja, who was the father of Nanda. Related to Parjanya were three uncles of Lord Krishna who were spotless in nature and praiseworthy in character. The *gopīs* such as Vishakha appeared in the lineage of the relatives of these three uncles of Lord Krishna. This indeed is the verdict of the expert *māgadhas*.”

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[**Translator’s Note:** Snigdhanakanta said that he will not say much about the lineage of Sri Radha and the *gopīs*. He just mentions “three uncles”. Their names are given in the *Rādhā-kṛṣṇa-ganoddeśa-dīpikā* as Yashodhar, Yashodev and Sudeva.]

“If someone says otherwise then the glorious restraint (*maryādā*) that Krishna exhibited when he voluntarily denied marrying the wives of the brahmins will never attain its pinnacle.”

[**Translator’s Note:** In other words, Krishna was so self-controlled that even though the wives of the brahmins offered themselves at the feet of Krishna, he did not accept them in marriage. Why? He cared for the social convention that it is not befitting a son of a lower caste *vaiśya* to marry the daughter of a high-caste *brāhmaṇa*.]

“And, moreover, in this situation everyone accepts the fact that the birth of Sri Radhika is from the wealthy and noble born senior cowherd named Vrīṣabhānu, whose good qualities are as large as an ocean.

“In this regard, all learned scholars joyously sing a verse as follows:

*satyaṁ bahu-suta-ratnā-karatām sa prāpa gopa-dugdhābdhiḥ
kintv amṛta-dyuti-rādhā-lakṣmī-jananād agāt pūrtim*

“True it is indeed! Vrīṣabhānu, who was like a great milk-ocean of sweetness among the *gopas*, was already rich with jewels in the form of many qualified sons. However, with the appearance of the eternally effulgent Lakshmi-like Radha, this ocean named Vrīṣabhānu attained fulfillment.”

[**Translator’s Note:** The ocean is complete because of two reasons — it has many valuable jewels, and it has Lakshmi as a daughter. Vrīṣabhānu is compared here to an ocean of sweet milk since he is also complete because he has so many valuable jewel-like sons and a daughter much better than Lakshmi Devi. The meter used here is *viśama-vṛtta* (uneven) and it is a variation of the meter named *āryā*.]

“Since she is born one year after Krishna in the all-auspicious constellation named Radha, she has been given this name.”

[To be continued.]

— Translated by Hari Parshad Das from the *Gopāla-pūrva-campūḥ*.
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